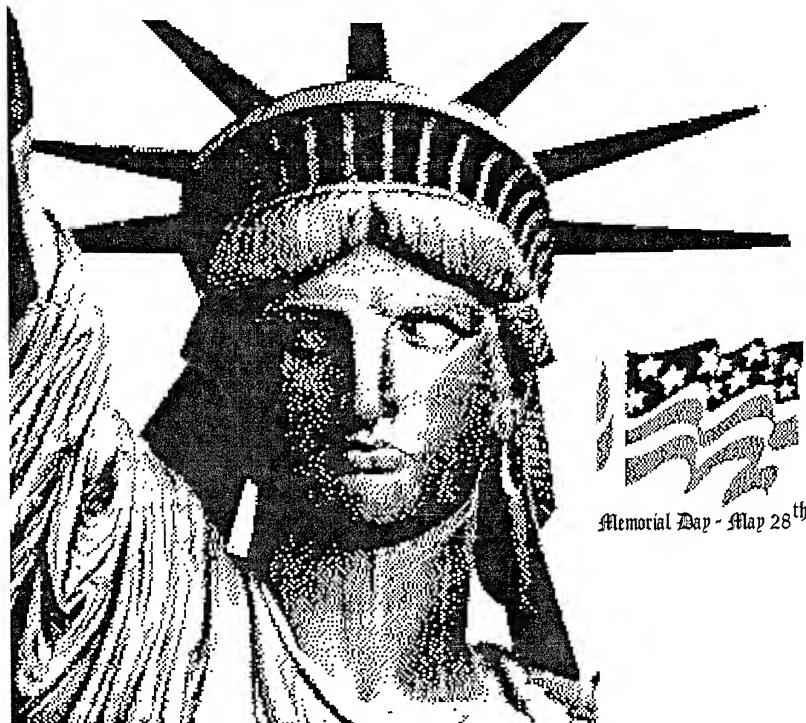


N orthern O hio A tari H elpers



Newsnotes

May 1990 Vol. 1, No. 7

\$1.00 / \$2.50 with Disk

The Editor's Corner



Well, since Kevin is on a combination vacation/house moving/heavy load business period, I have been asked to take over the Newsletter once again for a couple months. I have numerous fears not the least of which is trying to live up to the excellent standards he has set for the *N.O.A.H.* Newsletter. I only hope that the complaints aren't too numerous and when you throw this back at me it doesn't send me to the emergency ward suffering from an overdose of paper cuts!

In the past month we have seen the passing of a couple good bulletin boards in the area. One was Mega-Vision and the other NERD. I can only speak for NERD and the reasons are many not the least of which is the constant expense. Since starting the board almost 6 years ago I have gone through 4 hard

drives, 3 8-bit computers and 2 ST's. Then comes the expense of the phone line and the electricity. These are all valid reasons but the REAL reason for me was the time involved. I have a wife and six, yes SIX, children, own A A A Video and raise and breed Great Danes! I just found myself running out of time for the things that really mean the most to me.

Believe me, the money involved is not a small amount either. Try adding up the cost of the above mentioned equipment and see if you could swing it for any length of time. I did my best... □

Doug
a.k.a. King Nerd

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THIS MONTH'S COVER DISK:

This month's disk contains a demo of Chet Walters **Image Cat**. This is an excellent program and well worth the \$24.95 it sells for. Check out the review on this one and on MVG also by Chet and his company "Wiz Works".

Also on the disk are a few other often used utilities.

Enjoy...

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N.O.A.H. News

Lots of things happening here this month so... ON WITH IT !!!

Last meeting featured once again a Kevin Steele demonstration. This time it was the Spectre GCR from Gadgets by Small. Along side him was Frank Schmac with his MacIntosh running the identical programs. Needless to say, anticipation was high as to how the GCR would perform. After many tests, including loading the same page into PageMaker 3.0, the ST won the race for speed by about 25 %. As for being able to run MacIntosh programs, the ST and the Spectre GCR showed that almost everything runs just as smoothly on the ST as on the Mac.

The sound was of concern to most since the earlier version of GCR had a problem with the sounds used by the Mac. Once again the ST and Verion 2.6 of the GCR showed the David Small had once again delivered on his promise to make it a virtual MacIntosh.

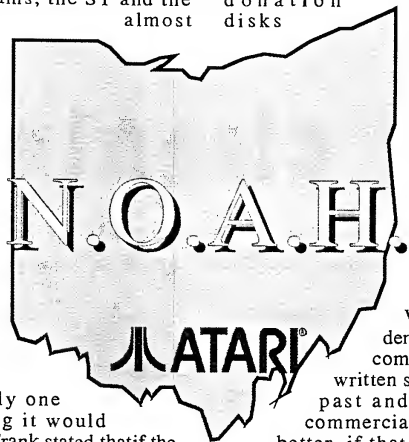
If I had to pick only one highlight of the meeting it would probably have to be when Frank stated that if the GCR had been out when he purchased his MacIntosh he would probably gone the route of the GCR coupled with the ST.

Once again I wish to applaud David Small and his company, Gadgets by Small, for a tremendous product and also for his dedication to the ST and the further improvements of his works.

This month's meeting was cancelled due to many reasons the most important being the previous commitments of a number of the officers

and organizers. I hope June's meeting will come off and at the present time I am almost sure it will. That meeting tentatively will feature MIDI once again this time with the aid of Joey G. and his \$20,000.00 Beta keyboard from Werzi. This man can definately WOW YA...

Other news here is the fact that the ST PD Library listing and organization is very near completion. Our librarian, Carol Paladin, and her assistants, John and Brenda Giguere are doing a tremendous job on an extremely LARGE project. This listing will be available to all N.O.A.H. members free of charge. I must also thank all those who contributed to the library including John and Brenda, Kevin Steele, Bob Kryniak and especially Carol who with her last pushed us to over 400 disks in the PD library!



I know, oops, I hope, summer is around the corner and most of us have many other things to do now that the weather allows us to go outside but the next few meetings will definately be of interest to all. Besides the MIDI demo in June, plans are tentatively set for Chet Walters to be here in July to demo all the programs from his company, Wiz Works. He has written some great programs in the past and now that he has gone commercial I feel that they are even better, if that is even possible. Along around August will be a rountable of computers with systems set up to handle all the regular questions such as "How do I arc?" etc. It has also been suggested that we hold an Atari Swap Meeting to allow the buying and selling of your unused or unwanted products. This may materialize if the details can be worked out.

Well, that's about it for news this month so until next month...□

Doug Novak



Spring Cleaning Sale

The following ST Software titles are normally priced from \$34.95 to \$59.95
but are now ALL at the LOW LOW price of..... \$29.95 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Battletech
Space Station Oblivion
Running Man
Deja Vu II
Wall Street
Corruption
Devon Aire
Universe III
Total Eclipse
Manhunter I
Manhunter II
Talespin



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Publishing Pointers



Publishing Step Two: The Fine Art of Placing Text

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From Typing to Typesetting

Last time, I gave you some information on how to type your text to save time when importing text into your desktop publishing program. This month, I'm going to give you a few pointers on how best to place that imported text on the page you're creating.

The first step in placing text should normally be placing a text box or column (depending on your program) on the page you want to create. With most programs, you can do this manually or have the program create the columns for you. When placing columns, there are a few things to consider:

- ✎ If you're using 10 or 12 point type, don't use columns that extend all the way across the page. This makes paragraphs that are extremely wide, and consequently makes them harder to read.
- ✎ Try to give yourself ample outside margins, but don't get carried away. 1 inch is more than enough, and for some documents, as little as 1/2 inch would be plenty.
- ✎ For the spacing in-between columns, 1/4 inch is usually sufficient. If you are using a very small point size (8 or 9 points), 1/8 inch might be better.
- ✎ If you're printing a document that will be double-sided, you need to remember to adjust the space in the "gutter" margin (the margin that will be on the inside edge of the page) so that when the document is printed and bound, you don't lose any text on that edge, or create an enormous gap between text on two pages. With gutter margins, trial-and-error prove to be a good measuring tool.

Spacing Text: Ragged or Flush?

Once you've placed your text columns, you should decide on how you're going to justify your text. "Ragged Right" is unjustified text, much like the text looks when you type in on a typewriter. The right edge is not flush, and looks "ragged." Believe it or not, this is the preferred method of laying out text columns, as some studies have suggested it is easier to read.

However, this rule is not set in stone, and if you have wide columns, justified ("Flush Right") text looks quite nice. However, be careful not to justify short columns, as the spacing on some lines may make the text look like it is "breaking apart."

Processing Text

Next, once you've set your justification, you should go ahead and import the text. Once it's in, you'll need to "massage" the text a bit to make it look just right. The following are my steps for massaging text:

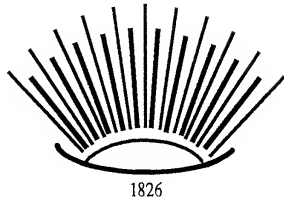
1. Use the global replace function to replace all "-" marks with a true EM dash.
2. Use the global replace to replace all pairs of accents (") and pairs of single quotes (') with true open and close quote characters.
3. Batch Kern the document to properly space the characters.
4. Batch Hyphenate the document to smooth out the lines. 5. Check for orphans and widows (single lines of a paragraph stranded on a previous page) and adjust the spacing by placing extra carriage returns before or after the line.

Finishing Touches

Now that the text is placed, you may want to go back and add some special "flourishes" to the text. For instance, you may want to create a special headline for the article. With PageStream, you can simply select the font/size you want and type it on the page where you want it, creating a "text object." If you want to get fancy, you can set the text runaround for the text object so that when you place it into a column, the text flows around it. You may want to enter special characters (such as a copyright symbol) into your document.

Well, this has been a rather brief look at placing text. I hope to expand on the subject in the future, but I've been striving to try and supply the bare basics of desktop publishing first, then go back and add the "professional" polish later. See you next month! □

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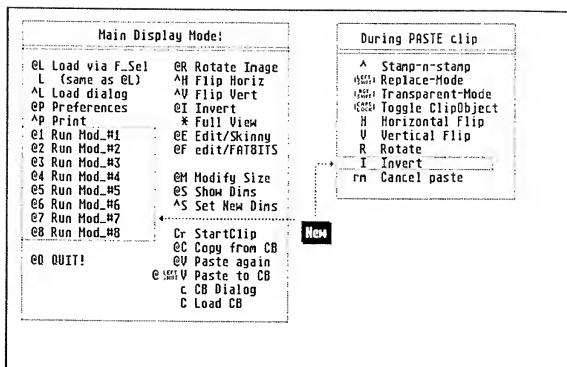
MVG

by Dr. Bob

Review by:
Doug Novak

First Of A Series

"Dr. Bob's Handy
Dandy MultiViewer
Graphica - as opposed to
MultiViewer Alpha"

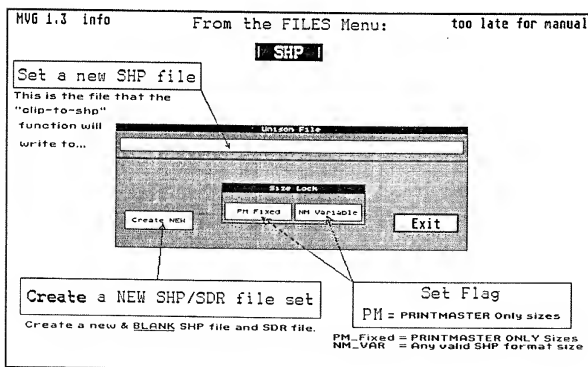


First off, I have to say that I have used *Touch-Up* by Migraph for almost a year already and thought that I had the best graphics manipulator that I could get. Boy was I wrong! After only a few hours I was totally converted to *MVG* permanently! In fact, so definite was my decision to switch that I removed *Touch-Up* from my hard drive. This also meant that I could remove the *Touch-Up* ASSIGN.SYS and not replace it since *MVG* does NOT require GDOS! That's right, no GDOS! Don't ask me, I don't know how he can do it without GDOS when everyone else needs it but then again, I don't

care, as long as it is gone. It's a pleasure not to have to deal with the slow-down GDOS causes and the headaches all the different ASSIGN.SYS files needed when you have numerous applications that require GDOS.

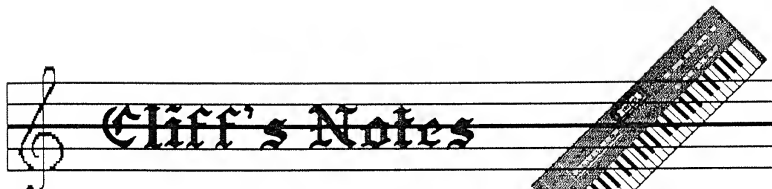
This month I will start with a basic overall description and some of the first time experiences I encountered with *MVG*.

In order to use *MVG* you will need at least one meg of memory and a monochrome monitor. Printer support includes Epson compatables and HP Deskjet and Laserjet.



The keyboard/mouse interface control is great. Almost every pull down menu selection has an equivalent keystroke in addition to which the number pad has been turned into a page scrolling control utilizing 8 of the keys.

(cont. pg. 9)



Time stamping: Everything in music revolves around time. Tempo, time signature, length of the music, all aspects involve time. So, if we are creating music on computers, the computer must have some way of understanding time. Depending on the way the software is written, the computer will have a time basis of a certain amount of pulses or clocks per quarter note. The standard for the MIDI specification is 24 clocks per quarter note.

Although this is fine for syncing instruments together that have internal clocks of their own, the resolution is rather coarse for music. As the musical information is input, the computer must place the information within its time frame. If its basis is 24 clocks, it will have less choices where it will place the information than if its time basis was 96 clocks per quarter note. The more clocks per quarter note the more natural the music will sound, because the computer will be able to place the musical information more exact to the way it's input. This theory is quite correct, but now one must consider other aspects of manageability, such as being able to edit the information once it's stored in the computer. The more choices the computer has for placing the information, the more complex everything becomes. Tasks such as auto correcting, individual note editing, tempo changes, ect. become less manageable because, now the user has to wade through the time base to find the information to edit. Then once it's found, a decision must be made as to where to place it.

From my experience, and most software developers, 96 clocks per quarter note is sufficient for most musical needs. It provides enough resolution and is manageable for editing. However, it all depends on what the user wants to accomplish. A free style jazz keyboardist would need a higher resolution software than a pop song writer. The jazz keyboardist is more interested in keeping the "feel" of the music than he is in event editing. These are some of the factors involved when choosing what kind of software to purchase, but there are many others which we will explore later.

Velocity: Most user definable values in the MIDI specification range from 0 to 127. The reason for this is, in order to keep the cost of implementing MIDI in a musical instrument as low as possible it was designed around a 8 bit processor. In a 8 bit configuration there are 256 combinations. In order to have as many features as possible the designers cut this in half. So, velocity values can range from 0 to 127. The half way point of course is 64.

The velocity value of a note can determine two different properties of a sound. The first is timber and the second is volume. A good example of this is the sound of a piano. Hit a key on th lightly and the tone produced will be low in amplitude

and mellow in character. Hit the same key harder and the tone produced will be louder and brighter in character.

When one is creating a patch or sound on a programmable synthesizer, usually there are parameters which enable or disable velocity sensitivity of the filters (timber), and amplitude (volume).

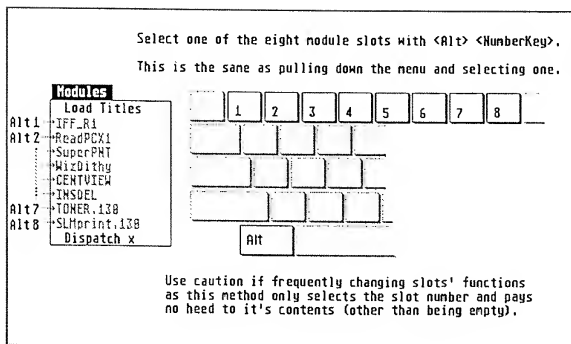
Under the keys of a synthesizer is a contact lever for each key centered between two buss bar rails which run the length of the keyboard. The key contact rests on the upper buss bar. When a key is pressed the contact comes off the upper buss bar which tells the CPU of the synthesizer the note that was pressed. Now, the time that it takes for the contact lever to come off the upper buss bar and hit the bottom buss bar tells the processor what the velocity value is.

Most music software will have a feature that enables the user to change velocity values of notes within a track either individually or globally (all notes). Controlling velocity values provides a means of automatic sound mixing as the orchestration builds, or subdue and exaggerate parts within the music.

- ♪ **Next month:** MIDI channels and software music tracks.
- ♪ Submit all questions concerning this column to *N.O.A.H.*
- ♪ We will try to answer all questions the following month.

Cliff Scott
is now appearing at
DelSangro's





Chet Walters and Dr. Bob have tentatively agreed to appear at a N.O.A.H. meeting in the near future. By then some of his "in the works" projects might just be completed. Hopefully **MUGSHOT** will be one of them.

Got a question on **MVG** or **IMAGE CAT**? Bring them into A A A Video and if I can answer them I will. If not, I'll pass them along to Dr. Bob and Chet Walters for you.

Some other stand-out features include "SNAPSHOT PI3 and QUICKKIES" in one pull-down menu. SNAPSHOT allows you to take a DEGAS PI3 picture from the current display and save it to disk. QUICKKIES is a fast loader for almost instant viewing of a pic.

Then there's the MODULE Menu. This feature allows you to "load and run" a program from within **MVG**. This differs from most "run other" features since only the work buffer is cleared and the current image and clipboard are left undisturbed! This would be good enough but **MVG** also has the capability to load lists of other outside modules to replace the list already in use making it's versatility endless.

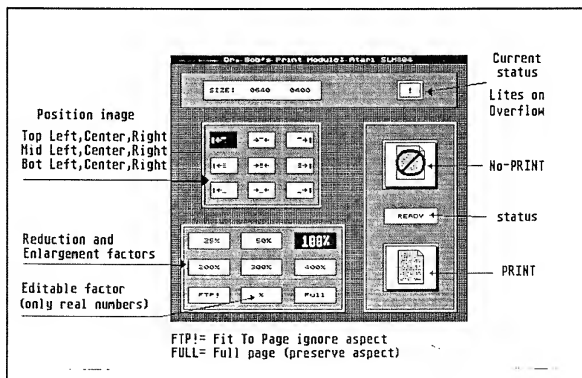
Well, here it is the end of the column for this month and believe me, I haven't even scratched the surface of this one.

Next month I will get into some of the details of the program and include some finished products of my hacking away at it.

Until Next Time,

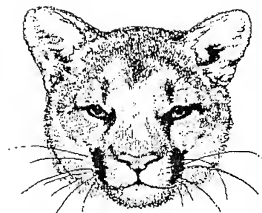
Doug

MVG is available at A A A Video for \$49.95 and for N.O.A.H. Members it's \$44.96.



Former ShareWare item freed
from the chains of GDOS!!

IMAGE CAT GOES COMMERCIAL!



IMG CAT was released in 1989 as a ShareWare item and found much success in that area. However, it was tied to GDOS and this author grew tired of explaining why there would only appear on each page in some instances 8 IMG files and in some instances NO IMG files because the GDOS printer driver crashed. Folks just did not seem to understand that the old **IMG CAT** was merely a "shell" which passed information to the GDOS printer driver installed and that the printer driver was at fault for the problems while **IMG CAT** remained guiltless. In it's present incarnation, **IMG CAT** works completely free of GDOS. It works about 20% faster than the old and works AS ADVERTISED since it depends in no way on any code written by anyone other than it's author.

PIC CAT was originally released long ago as a ShareWare item. In that kludgy GFA incarnation, one could catalogue a set of DEGAS pics on selected printers. However, the redraws of color pics left something to be desired. In it's present state, **PIC CAT** is written in tight fast machine code and the dithering of color pics is quite striking. With the ability to select shading and screening, the representations on the printed page are excellent and usefull for not merely clip art, but to keep an accurate record your collection of color pics as well.

*All three programs are included in
the IMAGE CAT package plus more!*

MAC CAT came about with the advent of Spectre GCR from Gadgets by Small. There are a good many excellent collections of clip art around the world stored in this format on the MAC. There is also a "pseudo" MAC format pic which comes from the Big Blue world and **MAC CAT** can detect and print these as well.

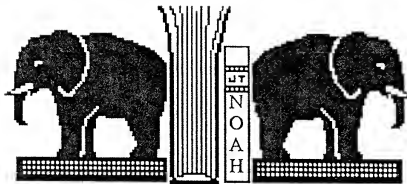
This three pronged attack on the disorganization of your clip art collection can be easily assessed through the judicious use of the **CATSPAW** menu program. Full View IMG accessory is also included for that quick look before you load to help you in finding just the right art for the DTP project at hand.

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N.O.A.H.'s Library

The public domain/shareware/freeware library is available to all members of *NOAH*. The disks will be maintained at **AAA Video** on Pearl Road. Any member may obtain a copy of any program by stopping at **AAA** with a formatted disk capable of holding the program being requested (the library listing will give the arced size and unarced sizes). All library disks are maintained as arced programs. To request a program, please fill out the request form available in this newsletter or pick up a form(s) at **AAA Video**. The program will be transferred to your disk by Doug Novak.

The library disks are currently being viewed, checked for sizes and type of program (freeware/shareware/public domain) and listed in a standard database format using Timeworks DataManager Professional. The fields are: category, title, arced size, unarced size, number of files, description, other (freeware, shareware, public domain). The complete listing will be on disk at **AAA Video** and a printout available for reference by all members as soon as possible.

Anyone wishing to donate any public domain programs should submit a copy of the program to Doug Novak or one of the librarians. Please be sure the program is indeed *public domain*, *shareware* or *freeware* and available for distribution freely. Thank you.

The librarians are: *Carol Paladin, John & Brenda Giguere*

BASEBALL [disk 1, 108k arced, 279 unarced]
This version of baseball is a text adventure only. The records are statistically accurate and comes with the data for four different teams. Prior to activating the program the user needs to place the team data into a folder that must be named 'team'. If you submit \$14.00 you will receive updates and extra teams.

BUBBLE [disk 1, 29k arced, 50k unarced]

How is your dexterity and planning? You will need to sharpen these as you advance from each screen to successfully bounce the bubble across the screen through the cavern with the use of only puffs of air. Of course you are restricted to a limited supply of air per screen. As the screens progress you will find that drops of water from the stalactites and the bumble bee flying will burst your bubble. You have as many bubbles per screen as you can produce with the quantity of air per level.

AZARIAN [disk 2, 54k arced, 145k unarced]

This beta test version is 'supposedly' in the works for a commercial version. The graphics are excellent. It is the standard shoot-em-up arcade game in which you fly a ship until you run out of energy trying to achieve the highest score possible.

FOOTBALL [disk 2, 23k arced, 47k unarced]

Player 1 (you) select your play then allowing the computer to select his. The computer scrolls the results of the confrontation across the screen and the football position is updated on the field. This cycle is repeated until one team scores or 15 plays end the quarter. Instructions are provided via a selection on the menu bar.

EAMON [disk 2, 95k arced, 148k unarced]

For the Dungeon & Dragons fan this text adventure has been ported to the ST, and still retains most of the features of the IBM original. You create a persona and send him/her through various adventures trying to gain whatever you can. One adventure is supplied with the program on this disk.

KIDPUB27 [disk 6, 45k arced, 83k unarced]

By D A Brumleve this educational program is aimed for the kindergartener through second grade. This prototype of Kidpublisher has 5 pages of documentation and allows editing, printing, screen dumps to the printer and has a wide left margin. The startgem.prg, control.acc and desktop.inf need to be in the root directory. The program will print out the top half of a page blank for drawing and allow the child to type whatever text s/he wants on the bottom half of the page.

MACCEL [disk 6, 9k arced, 15k unarced]

This is a configurable mouse accelerator that should be placed on your auto boot disk. The documentation provided is very interestingly written.

Shinobi

by: Ryan Weaver

Out there somewhere in Godly space, lies a gift - a gift that can be given to only very special people. It lies within the heart of every Ninja Warrior. It's ninja magic. Everybody has a little. They just don't know how to unleash it. Now, through Sega Enterprises, you can release your Ninja magic in SHINOBI. Here is Shinobi's life story.

One hot summer day, everything began to go wrong. Shinobi, once a graduate of a secret oriental Ninja school, had been invited back to a celebration for the graduation of seniors. Everything was perfect. Things were rolling smoothly, the entertainment was good, the food delicious, the speeches not too long, but then it happened... Bwah Foo entered the picture. A graduate of the Ninja school himself, he had turned to the evil ways. Bwah Foo recognized Shinobi and unleashed his Ninja magic, restraining Shinobi from moving an inch. Then his henchmen led away the senior class. The evil Foo stepped onto a speech-giving platform and thrust his face into Shinobi's, declaring that if he didn't get all the gold in the school's coffers, no one would ever see the senior class again!

In a few hours, Foo's magic had worn

off, or so Shinobi thought. Then he went to the principal, but the principal said that all the gold was gone. He was even asking for some from the pupils' parents, to be used to build a gymnasium. There was only one thing to do. Shinobi had to find and rescue all of the students. A ransom note was sent to the school, saying that if Foo didn't get his gold by Wednesday, his henchmen would kill all the students!

Now, you are Shinobi and you must help him fight his way through Bwah's shield of men until you come upon Bwah Foo himself. Then you're really in for some action. There are four levels, none of which are easy. The boss at the end of each stage is waiting for you and you must defeat him in a fight to the death before you can move on. So, with this, I say good luck Ninja Warriors, and bring 'em back alive!

When I first heard Shinobi was made for Atari, I thought maybe the graphics wouldn't be quite as good as on the Sega system, so as not to compete. But when I first loaded it up, I was truly wrong. Even the music was superb. There's a different tune for every stage. As far as the action, no comparison! If you like action karate games, you'll love SHINOBI by Sega Enterprises.

N.O.A.H. Thanks Ryan Weaver and MVACE for permission to reprint this review.

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Atari's New STE - An Inside Look

by John Nagy

(reprinted with permission from MVACE)

I have seen the future of Atari computing... and so has most of the world. Unfortunately, the STE computer (E for "enhanced"), which will replace the 520STFM and 1040STFM altogether, is still not available in the USA. FCC testing is continuing and the latest revision is expected to pass in the coming 6 weeks. When it does pass, the STE will hopefully end the ST machine shortage that is frustrating many US dealers. Contrary to common speculation Atari is NOT putting the US STE on "hold" in order to sell old stock 520 and 1040 machines - there aren't many of them left. When available, the one meg STE may be at or below current 1040STF prices, and offer more features. In Canada, the 1040STE retails at \$900 (US equivalent) but sells for as little as \$560 in US dollars. That's without monitor, of course.

Through reports from European magazines, Canadian users, Atari tech reports, and my own hands on experience, we can give you this look ahead on what to expect from the STE, inside and out.

The STE will come in at least three flavors... with 1, 2, and 4 meg of ram. I had the opportunity to see and use several versions including the 4160STE four meg unit. The most welcome feature to many will be the single-in-line-memory-modules ("SIMMS") that allow users to increase memory as easily as plugging a card into an existing socket inside the computer. A complete disassembly appears not to be required, as the RAM cards have a separately removeable shield just under the top panel. Keep in mind that the shield may be revised before the FCC is satisfied.

The STE machines look just like the the "current" STFM machines. The sole clues to the differences are the pair of extra joystick ports on the left side, a pair of phono jacks just under the power switch on the back, and of course, the little "E" instead of the little "F" or "FM" on the model tag on the top.

Inside, the changes are more apparent, with the RAM sockets the most obvious. The keyboard and power supply look to be basically unchanged (sorry... many people

hate the keyboard feel and the underside mouse/joystick connectors!), but below it is a totally new motherboard. Many fewer chips are being used, with new VLSI superchips reducing costs, power draw, heat, assembly time, and repair problems. Jim Allen Jr., maker of the TURBO 16 accelerator boards for the ST and MEGA says "This is how the ST should have been built in the first place." However, Jim's speedup board will NOT operate in the STE as currently designed, because the STE has the new SQUARE 68000 CPU chip. TURBO 16 is designed to solder on top of the more common rectangular 68000. Be assured, Jim is working on alternatives. Similar problems face other internal upgrade manufacturers (PC DITTO II, PC-SPEED, etc.).

A pleasant sight on the new STE board is a BLITTER chip. These never made it to the ST series, but MEGA users have enjoyed the screen speed increases of this chip for some time. The TOS in use is version 1.6, which gives the features of 1.4 PLUS new possibilities. Also, the STE has an RF modulator and composite video output. Although present on late model 1040ST's the ability to run a TV as a monitor is a welcome feature. Output is at least as good as the older units, and perhaps a bit cleaner.

New features and capabilities include:

- * Digital 8-bit sampled pulse code stereo audio output. Feeding out the two jacks in the rear, the new sound is dramatic. Music programmed for this feature sounds as good as most low-mid synthesizers, with full orchestration possible. The sound is DMA controlled so it uses no CPU time, allowing complex sound and complex video without interaction.

- * Two extra joystick/lightgun/paddle/etc. jacks. The 15 pin connectors can each accommodate three devices, allowing up to EIGHT simultaneous players on games designed to use them and the "old" joysticks... more if someone uses the keyboard too.

- * 4,096 colors available. Although the color resolution and number of colors at once

remains the same as on the ST series (4 in medium, 16 in low resolution), the STE has 16 levels of each "pure" color (red, green, blue) instead of just 8. Thus, 16 shades of exactly the same color can be generated, a dramatic visual improvement. Through fast palette shifting, the graphics can appear much more varied and vibrant, and gradients can be much softer. Games can look a lot better. It has been suggested that SPECTRUM can and should be revised to display 4,096 colors at once, which will make for incredible pictures!

* Hardware screen scrolling and control. Fans of the 8-bit Atari remember the ease of use of graphics modes that allowed "display lists" and instant screen scroll. Well, it's back on the STE! It can do fast scrolls in any direction without cpu-hungry memory moves.

* TOS 1.6. It appears to be almost completely compatible with TOS 1.4, allowing "old style" sound and color schemes to run as expected, but timings show it to be up to 10% faster is screen drawing. However, it takes a larger memory block now, up to 256k from the old 192k. An unexpected plus appears to be a pre-planned compatibility with 68030 CPU chips. If so, computing speed could be increased many-fold, but hardware TT features probably can not be added.

* User memory upgradable to 16 MEG. Using (expensive!) 4-bit wide SIMMS, you can plug in as much memory as you can afford.

There is no "MEGA Expansion SLOT" inside the STE, but it is said that the hardware will allow use of the JRI GENLOCK video system without the circuit modification needed in MEGA's. The standard CART slot remains, and all scanners, emulators, and video digitizer carts tested worked properly.

Also not available in the STE is a direct method of "overscan" picture display. This is the ability to have picture elements reaching the edges of the screen and beyond, as we are used to on television sets. This may be the single largest complaint of those who hoped an "enhanced" ST would provide a more competitive answer to the Amiga for video

and desktop presentation applications. (Through software "tricks", some programs are able to place graphics in the edge "dead zones", but these generally eliminate compatibility with external video standards.)

Minor bug reports are abounding in Canada and overseas. many stem from the fact that a proper CONTROL.ACC control panel is not yet available. Using the old ST file only allows addressing the normal 512 color selection. Worse, each time you call the panel, ALL of your colors darken by a single intensity value! Another bug makes the STE boot into LOW resolution regardless of directions from a valid DESKTOP.INF that tells it to start in MEDIUM. However, the problems are being addressed by Atari and developers. The very few programs (including the popular POPULUS game) that conflict with the new TOS will almost certainly be adjusted quickly. Expect things to be well settled by the time you can buy the STE in the USA.

Software that supports the new features of the STE are few and far between so far. A few demos and a single game from Atari show great scrolling, fab music, and stunning graphics. "WHITE WATER MADDNESS" looks and sounds wonderful while otherwise being a rather average game. Some developers may be reluctant to program screens for yet another palette and sound system, since compatibility with the existing ST user base is critical. But, just as many fine games feature both internal and MIDI sound output, the better programs of the future will include support for both the 512 and 4,096 color selections and digital sound.

In short, the STE is indeed "enhanced". It is a clear evolution in the development of the ST series, without the sting of a higher price.

*N.O.A.H. Thanks John Nagy, MVACE, Z*Net, Atari Canada, Atari US, Darek Mihocka, and ST World UK for supplying the above information.*

MIDWINTER

by Microprose Europe

Review by Rick Gridley

In the past, European releases were always known for the best in arcade action. In the Strategy/simulation/CRPG field however, Europe always had to take a "backseat" to the American software houses. In 1989 that trend started to change with the release of *Populous* and *Bloodwych*. Now in 1990, it seems that the floodgates are opening to a stream of European designed simulations that rival and better anything else on the market.

The year is 2099. Sixty years previous a meteorite hit the Earth, raising clouds of dust into the atmosphere of Earth, plunging the planet into global freeze. The collision also caused the planet to wobble and land masses to slip along fault lines. Panic and Chaos reigned supreme on the planet and when a "new" land mass was discovered in the Atlantic Ocean, you and your small band colonised it and set up a self-supporting community, free of the turmoil of the outer world. Now, outsiders have started to settle in the southern part of the island of Midwinter and with a militant leader, they are determined to seize all of Midwinter. Can you and your band of 32 characters slow down and defeat this invasion?

Playing the role of Captain Stark, you journey across hills and valleys recruiting your team to fight the enemy. Some will join right away others will refuse. Each character had a background of relationships with other characters of Midwinter and they will react differently to each individual they come into contact with. As you recruit new members, you can take control of them and use them to recruit that member that refused the request of Capt. Stark.

The game is icon driven. Just about every action in the game is done by the point and click method, making *Midwinter* a easy game to play yet retaining the deep strategic aspect of the game. The game comes on two disks and the excellent packaging includes a very detailed 192 page storybook/manual. A ST specific supplement instruction sheet and a small notepad of maps are also included in the package.

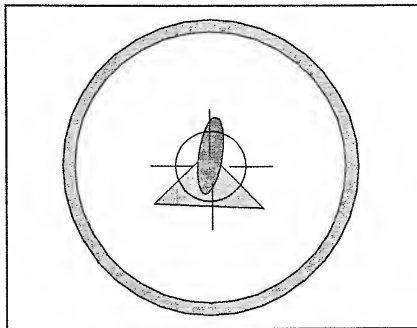
The game is played on a large map that you can zoom in or out of revealing various villages/mountain huts/ski lifts/garages and so forth. A click changes the map into a photographic relief map showing the shaded landscape viewed from above. This satellite view shows greater ground detail, and incorporates every ridge and gully of the landscape, which is useful information when planning a journey across unfamiliar terrain. If fact, at maximum

magnification each pixel corresponds to a facet of the solid graphics landscape.

Midwinter is played as a series of two hour turns. With each turn you have control of each character, thus you control character one for two hours then move to character two and control him/her for two hours doing this for each member of your team. As your party grows, this turn cycle takes longer and longer.

As you control your characters through different actions they start to lose energy and without some rest they start to perform at less than peak efficiency. You must feed your people also and stopping at a friendly house can afford one a hot meal.

Travel in *Midwinter* can be done by four different means. Everyone is equipped with skis and this is the basic means of transportation. However cross-country skiing drastically reduces your energy level. With each character having 14 personal attributes, a click to the 'stats' screen will show you your best skiers. The snow buggy is the most common form of transport and they can be found in the various garages that dot the landscape of



(cont)

Midwinter. You can chose from three different types of snow buggies each with the capability of carrying different amounts of passengers and weapons. Oh yes, some characters are better drivers than others. Also, be careful about driving up into the mountains. You can easily tip over or fall into a ravine destroying your buggy and injuring yourself.

Cable cars are very safe to travel in and will carry you over long distances through the mountains and take you to points where you can try the most difficult yet fastest way of traveling, Hang-Gliding. When hang-gliding you will ride the thermals and with practice and the choice of a good hang-gliding character, large distances can be searched and traveled. Remember those thermals are strongest around mountain ranges and the seacoasts.

The visuals of Midwinter are top rate. The view through your windshield or skiing goggles shows the realtime action of your movements. Everywhere you look you will see gently undulating slopes, ridges and gullies, or steep mountainsides. The 3-D light-source shading techniques used in generating the landscape, as developed by Maekstrom Games in association with Microprose over six man-years, show distant features as hazy, shadowy shapes, which loom out of the mist as you hurtle towards them and swiftly attain a sharp and terrifying solidity.

You will also notice that the shading on the slopes range from nearly black, through a whole range of greys and blues, to white, and that the shadowing effect is darkest on north-facing sides of slopes and hills. This directional effect is created by the 'light-source shading' used, in which the sunlight is always coming from the south of the island, nearest to the equator, and the resulting shadows are faithfully created.

Sound effects consist of the swishing of your skis through the snow and the rumbling of you

snow buggies engine. When hang-gliding you can almost feel the wind rushing around your body. You will hear the enemy convoys before you see them and turning towards them causes the sound of their engines to increase, giving you a warning of approaching vehicles.

Combat is an exciting part of the game and a well armed buggy can delay if not stop even the meanest of enemy columns, if you can find the commanders vehicle. Also, if lucky you will come across the enemies supply convoys and dispatching a string of tankers into oblivion can grind the nastiest enemy advance, to a screeching halt. Watch out for those enemy aircraft and trying climbing a tree and sniping at a convoy from the protection and concealment of a large evergreen or climb up into that church steeple and pick away at the approaching column. Sneak in and destroy those enemy supply bases, anything to slow his advance.

Eventually you will mount an effort to capture the enemy home base. A lot of time, skill and luck will reward you with the freedom the island of Midwinter deserves.

It is very hard to give this game justice in a written review and its claim of strategy game of the decade will not be disputed from this corner. Highly, highly recommended.

I have been playing two new imports, Warhead and Xenomorph. Both are state of the art games. Warhead deals with outerspace combat, ala StarRaiders, but updated to 1990 style games and Xenomorph is Dungeonmaster meets Aliens with lots of levels and monsters for you CRPG types. In depth review on this one next month.

Until next time...

Rick

Check Out The N.O.A.H. PD Disk Library

MVG

From: WizWorks

Officially released on April 28th, 1990, MVG is being billed as the alternative to high priced bit editors. Dr. Bob's Handy Dandy MultiViewer Graphica is the program of choice for editing/manipulating clip art. Featuring one of the rare editors which performs work on images larger than screen size, MVG will not bog you down with abysmal slowness (there's no speedometer necessary to show you how far into the task at hand MVG has progressed, the task is done!).

Capable of loading IMG (up to 32767 x 32767), PI#, PC#, TN#, NEO, MAC, WAC, PCX, and SuperPaint files, MVG can edit these images with varied brushes, lines, frames, boxes and patterns. Featuring a fast rotate and flip of image or clip, shrink/enlarge, masked clips and a fat bit editor that must be seen to be appreciated, your clip art will never look better. MVG applies a fully adjustable Floyd-Stienberg dithering algorithm to color pics for some very striking half tones. You can save in IMG, MAC (true compatible MACs for you Spectre owners and MacUSers), PI3, PC3, NEO and WAC formats.

MVG will print on the above mentioned printers and includes an SLM driver with resizing and "fit to page".

And modules! The neatest thing since sliced beer! MVG's modular design affords an easy and inexpensive upgrade path and it comes with detailed documentation which allows those so inclined to expand MVG to whatever limits the universe or human creativity might impose. MVG presently runs in monochrome only but work is underway for compatibility with big screens (and the future release of the Atari TT).

Planned upgrade modules will include scanner capability, text and fonts, intricate resizing, additional file handling, and more at very reasonable upgrade prices (even some freebies so the good Dr. states). MVG is written by Mr. W. D. Parks and priced at only \$49.95, this one is moving fast too. Requires one meg of memory.

Reprint courtesy of: WizWorks

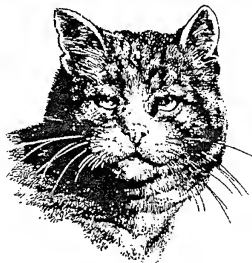
ed. note: With only a few hours to test MVG before the Newsletter had to go to print, I can still tell you that it sure beats the heck out of the other "high priced" spreads! Truelt and excellent piece of work...

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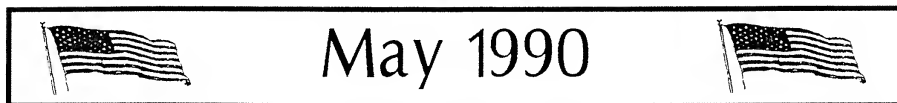
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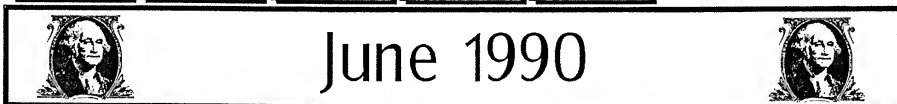
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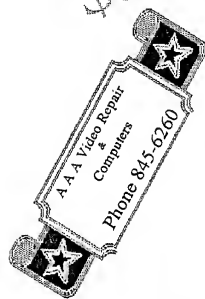
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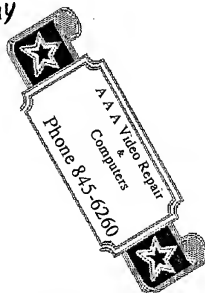
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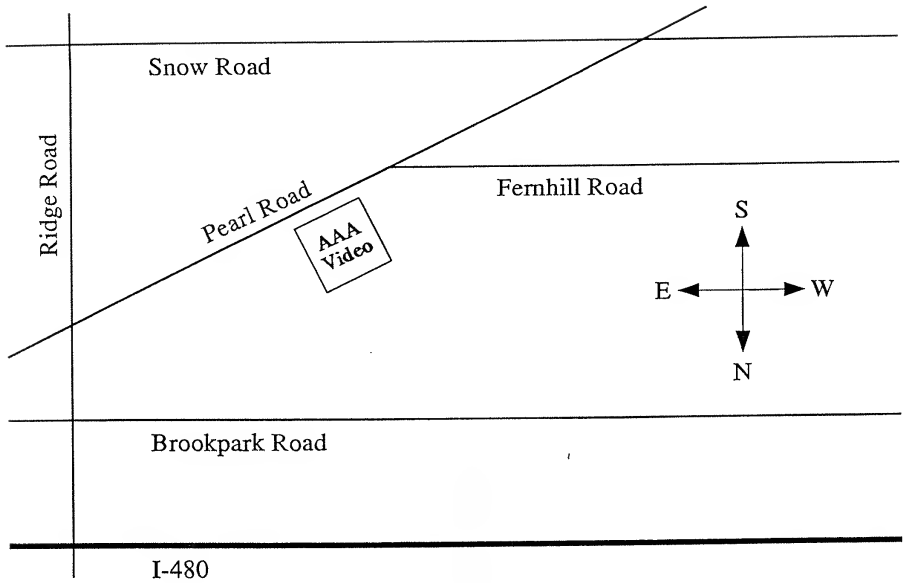
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